JOINT US-AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE FACILITIES:

SOME IMPLICATIONS FOR AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE POLICY

Gillian Welshe

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Research School of Pacific Studies,
The Australian National University, Canberra.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Australia is currently undergoing a watershed period in the development of national defence policy. The post-war decades of tranquil economic development, cushioned by the comfortable expectation that our great and powerful ally, the United States would protect Australia in the face of any national security threat, have steadily evaporated under the impact of major strategic developments in the international arena during the sixties and seventies. Awareness of the need to reassess Australia's strategic situation and review defence policy has generally developed slowly and somewhat reluctantly and apart from a few specialists in the field, the public debate generated in recent years by the enquiries of the Joint Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence has represented the first major attempt since the war, at the political level, to focus national attention on Australia's future defence requirements. The Committee's enquiries have addressed a wide range of issues and provided a valuable public forum for discussion of defence matters.

It is in the context of a rapidly changing strategic environment and a resurgent public interest in the defence debate that the question of US-Australian military and scientific facilities in Australia is receiving scrutiny. In this respect the work of the Parliamentary Committee from

1980 to 1983 in conducting major inquiries into defence and security matters and promoting informed and rational debate on the subject of the joint defence facilities has been invaluable.

From Australia's perspective, the international strategic environment has changed dramatically and without warning in the last two decades. There has been tension and conflict in Southeast Asia, South Asia, Africa, Latin America, Central America and within the communist world. Major realignments have occurred between China and the United States and China and Japan. Conflict in the Gulf States has had ramifications on oil supplies and the energy policies of most nations. The domestic politics within many countries, including Australia, have witnessed dramatic upheavals and changes. However, throughout this period, Australian leaders and their advisors have largely been content to rely on the assessment that there are no direct threats on the horizon and consequently, that there is little urgency about exerting much effort towards improving defence capabilities.

In his evidence to the Joint Committee enquiring into the implementation of the Australian Government's announced Defence programs, T.B. Millar strongly disputed this view.

> ... it is beyond reason to assume that the next two decades will be ones of international calm, with all changes foreseeable, foreseen, evolutionary in nature, and anticipated by our wise precautions. The reverse is much more

> likely and the crisis in Afghanistan must be seen as one of a whole range of events that will affect international peace and security with a speed and severity not likely to be matched by our perceptions or our preparations.[1]

Whilst the recent developments in the Middle East, Iran, Iraq, the south Atlantic and Grenada are geographically distant, they nevertheless have great significance for Australia and the Western alliance system and serve to illustrate the unpredictable nature of international relations and the dangers of relying on threat-free strategic assessments.

It is to be expected that international tensions and disputes associated with ongoing friction about resources, boundaries, racial differences, historical events and many other factors will always be a feature of international life. This underlies the need for continual application of diplomatic skill supported by the capacity to defend national interests in a more tangible way if required.

To date, in the absence of any direct threat to continental Australia for some forty years, there has been considerable evidence of complacency on the part of political and military leaders. The Defence White Paper of 1976 confirms this impression. It argues that the conjunction of conditions giving rise to military action is infrequent among the nations of the world and takes time to develop[2] and that

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[1] T.B. Millar, evidence to Parliamentary Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence, 2 April 1980.

[2] Defence White Paper, A.G.P.S., November 1976, p.2.

> ... major threats (requiring both military capability and political motivation) are unlikely to develop without preceding and perceptible indicators. The final emergence of a major military threat to Australia would be a late stage in a series of developments.[3]

Yet many of the major disturbances and conflicts of the past decade have been largely unforeseen and unpredictable. As in the cases of Iran, Afghanistan and the Falklands, they appeared to develop overnight, and furthermore they did not occur in the three key areas of strategic significance, the nuclear relationship and the theatres of central Europe and Northeast Asia identified in the White Paper. Certainly the nations of the Western world had taken few specific precautions to meet such contingencies. Beginning with the OPEC oil crisis of the early seventies and continuing through to the most recent conflicts in the Falklands and Grenada, the implications are now very clear. No nation can afford the luxury of a 'no foreseeable threats' attitude to its defence planning, however attractive that may be for domestic political, budgetary or diplomatic purposes.

Whilst the 1976 White Paper recognised the changing strategic circumstances it concluded that, on the whole, Australia's position was favourable and it made no firm recommendations in favour of a major rethinking of defence issues. There was no clarification of whether overall orientation of policy should be towards inhibiting the emergence of threats or reacting to them, or some combination

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[3] ibid., p.10.

of both. Although it is well recognised that continental defence is the basis of national security planning, the extent of geographic responsibility remains unclear and questions remain concerning the inclusion of Papua New Guinea, Antarctica, the two hundred mile fishing limit, resources zones, sea bed boundaries or nearby island territories. The concept of self reliance has yet to be formulated in planning policy and the circumstances in which the post Guam Doctrine and now more qualified ANZUS treaty might become operative need clarification. In addition, questions remain regarding Australian policy on uranium and nuclear weapons and although these matters have been discussed to some extent in recent statements by the Prime Minister, Mr R.J. Hawke,[4] and the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr W. Hayden,[5] and in the leaked Strategic Basis papers,[6] all of these matters need clarification. It is to be hoped that the next Defence White Paper will address these issues.

In relation to the American alliance, the 1976 Paper recognises that 'even though our security may be ultimately dependent upon US support, we owe it to ourselves to be able to mount a national defence effort that would maximise the risks and costs of any aggression',[7] but it fails to assess

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[4] R.J. Hawke, C.P.D. (H of R), 6 June 1984.

[5] W. Hayden, Uranium, The Joint Facilities, Disarmament and Peace, A.G.P.S., 1984.

[6] 'The Strategic Basis Papers', The National Times, 30 March 1984.

[7] Defence White Paper, op.cit.

the types of threats which would elicit United States support or the significance of the US defence related facilities on Australian soil. Australia's historical and political orientation towards great and powerful allies, firstly Britain and then the United States, has engendered habits of dependency which are hard to break. Whilst there is no doubt that these alliances have served Australia well in the past and could do so in the future, there is also no doubt that in the post Vietnam War years, United States interests in the Southeast Asian and Pacific area have been fundamentally reassessed and that it is highly unlikely that forces and resources will be committed to the same extent again. However, whilst it is recognised that the threshold of US military involvement may have risen, nevertheless the American commitment to the region in principle remains firm and would be given more tangible forms of support if perceived to be in the US national interest.

Alliance with the United States has characterised Australia's post World War II thinking, with the dispatch of Australian forces in some cases and support for the US by Australia's spokesmen in international forums as insurance premiums for the continuance of the alliance. Both sides have benefited from the relationship, the United States in having a dependable ally on another side of the globe, and Australia in enjoying the protection of a great and powerful friend. The establishment of the joint defence and scientific

facilities in Australia occurred largely during the fifties and sixties when the alliance enjoyed its most popular support in Australia. The significance of these facilities for Australian defence policy, the costs of hosting the facilities and indeed, the facilities themselves, received little public attention until recent years, when renewed public interest in defence matters was generated by the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence, by government decisions regarding major defence purchases and by publication of a number of academic books and articles critical of aspects of existing policy.

These developments are an encouraging sign that defence matters are receiving the public prominence and attention they deserve and that the habit of dependence on a great and powerful ally is lessening in favour of a more critical evaluation of security needs in the light of a realistic assessment of national interests. In relation to the extent of overlap in US and Australian national interests, the circumstances in which it is unreasonable of us to expect a superpower to treat Australia as a partner and the need for independent analysis, R.H. Mathams has commented

> To me that is one excellent reason for having a very competent, objective, professional intelligence analysis organisation which looks at the United States in exactly the same way as it looks at the Soviet Union, China, France or whatever, not as a putative enemy but as an object for study. Such an organisation should try to determine the future policies and future actions of the United States. That is a legitimate role

> for a national intelligence assessment organisation. It does not imply that we have any antipathy towards the United States.[8]

In this renewed defence debate, serious consideration is now being given to the development of an indigenous defence capability and the myth that Australia would not be capable in any circumstances of defending herself with her own resources has been strongly disputed by analysts including R. O'Neill and R. Babbage.[9] Nevertheless, given Australia's changed strategic environment and the necessity for a more self-reliant continental defence policy based on regional assessments, the pervasive attitudes associated with dependence on powerful allies do not auger well for the future. In this respect the work of the Parliamentary Joint Committee in its enquiries into 'Threats to Australia's Security', 'The ANZUS Alliance' and other defence matters, has been most important in promoting better public understanding of the issues involved.

Throughout these Committee enquiries the subject of the joint defence facilities has received considerable attention, not only from academics but also from defence specialists whose views are not usually widely available to the general public. The Committee Reports and Transcripts

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[8] R.H. Mathams, evidence to Parliamentary Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence, 9 February 1981.

[9] See for example R. O'Neill (ed), The Defence of Australia: Fundamental New Aspects and R. Babbage, Rethinking Australia's Defence.

constitute a valuable source of information on the significance of the joint facilities for Australian defence policy in addition to the recent literature on the subject since the publication of D. Ball's A Suitable Piece of Real Estate in 1980. The Joint Committee, in providing a bipartisan forum for the discussion of defence issues, can be expected to continue to provide a unique contribution to the defence debate in the coming years as it carries out its task of establishing a framework or set of criteria with which to judge the adequacy of Australia's defence.

The major strategic problem for Australia in the eighties will be to define its future role and national interests in an international system where dynamic changes can occur within a very short time. There are no easy solutions, but it is vital to Australia's security to establish a viable defence capacity within the regional context and to ensure that adequate resources are applied to the program of ongoing policy analysis and review which evaluates policy in the light of continuous assessment of national interests. In relation to the joint facilities, it is essential that the ongoing appraisal of their function and role be carried out in terms of their contribution to Australia's national interests. In this way Australia will ensure that it does not become dependent on American goodwill and perception of self interest for its security. The American alliance is important to Australia especially in the global context, but it is no substitute for a responsible Australian national security policy.

CHAPTER II

THE JOINT DEFENCE FACILITIES IN AUSTRALIA

The establishment of joint defence facilities in Australia originated during World War II in collaboration with both the British and the Americans. Since that time the growth in the number and the scope of the joint facilities has closely parallelled Australia's increasing commitment to the American alliance and by the 1980s an extensive defence system of technically sophisticated communications and intelligence-gathering facilities along with a number of scientific installations exists on Australian soil. These facilities have become the subject of considerable debate in recent years in regard to their implication for Australian national security, sovereignty and foreign policy.

As the Hansard record of Parliament shows, numerous questions have been asked over the years since 1963 about the functions and significance of the facilities for Australian defence policy and have been answered with varying degrees of candour.[1] The most important aspect of Ball's work is the contribution made towards greater public understanding of the nature and role of the installations in terms of our national interests and the changing character and significance of the facilities as technological developments take place.

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[1] The most comprehensive answer provided by any Minister for Defence was Mr Killen's reply to a question on notice from Mr Scholes C.P.D. (H of R), 10 October 1978.

> The product of increasing the amount of publicly available information about the US installations should be a much more informed debate on this controversial but critical subject. Most of the installations were established during a period when Australia faced an entirely different alliance relationship; a national stocktaking is long overdue.[2]

In the past three years during the course of several inquiries by the Joint Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence the resurgence of public interest in defence matters has resulted in more informed discussion and debate. Expert witnesses to the Committee have provided an analysis of the role and significance of the joint facilities which has greatly enhanced the general level of understanding of the issues involved.

The facilities can be broadly classified under three headings - communications, intelligence-gathering and scientific. A definitive account of all the facilities is difficult to compile because of the classified nature of the work being carried out.

The first group of facilities, those with communications and navigation functions, includes the North West Cape station, the Omega navigation station in East Gippsland, Victoria and the TRANET station 112 at Smithfield in South Australia.

The most important of the communications facilities, and arguably the most significant in strategic terms is the North West Cape installation established in 1963 near Exmouth

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[2] D. Ball, A Suitable Piece of Real Estate, p.157.

in Western Australia. The establishment of this facility was given warm approval by the Australian government which agreed to permit the American government to establish, maintain and operate for a minimum of twenty-five years, a naval communication station at North West Cape at a peppercorn rental. In his second reading speech introducing the enabling legislation, Sir Garfield Barwick outlined the station's purpose as being 'to transmit and receive wireless messages' and that use of the facilities of the station by Australian forces would significantly increase their effectiveness both in training and in wartime operations in terms of mutual ANZUS obligations.[3] The terms of the agreement included Australian right of access to the station at all times, and 'without qualification, restriction of the use of the station to defence communication except with Australian consent'.[4] However it was further stated that a basic principle of the agreement was that the station shall be in the sole control of the United States and that 'it is not intended to give Australia control or access to the content of messages transmitted over the station'.[5]

These contradictory elements were partially resolved at the renegotiation of the agreement on 1974 when it was agreed that the North West Cape would become a 'joint facility'. There had been concern expressed in some academic and political

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[3] Sir Garfield Barwick, C.P.D. (H of R), 9 May 1963.

[4] ibid.

[5] ibid.

circles that Australian interests were not being fully acknowledged. D. Ball states that in 1972 the station was used to support the mining of North Vietnamese Harbours and in October 1973 was used to communicate a low-level general nuclear alert without reference to the Australian government.[6] In 1978 a new satellite ground station was installed without consultation with the Australian government causing considerable embarrassment to the then Defence Minister, Mr Killen, in Parliament. Subsequent discussions between American and Australian officials improved the process of consultation between the two governments.

In terms of strategic importance to the United States' global activities, North West Cape is an essential link in the chain of communications with the US Fleet ballistic missile submarines and, with its recently upgraded satellite monitoring capability, it will be able to provide more extensive communications facilities to US naval forces. The possibility that the orders could be transmitted without Australian knowledge through North West Cape to American fleet ballistic missile submarines carrying nuclear weapons and that these orders could be contrary to Australian interests has been addressed by the present Minister of Foreign Affairs.

> ... agreement has been reached between the US and Australian Governments on new arrangements to ensure that the Australian Government is able to make

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[6] D. Ball, op.cit., p.145.

> timely judgements about the significance for our national interests of developments involving North West Cape. Those arrangements are now in force.[7]

The second major category and perhaps most controversial of the joint facilities in Australia is that associated with the gathering of intelligence. These facilities include Pine Gap, Nurrungar, and the activities of the US National Security Agency at North West Cape and other areas in conjunction with the Defence Signals Directorate, as well as some aspects of the work of the space tracking stations' seismological, meteorological and other scientific facilities. However it is the defence satellite ground facilities in central Austalia with sophisticated electronic surveillance capacity that have generated most public debate.

Both the United States-Australian Joint Defence Space Research Facility (UDSRF) at Pine Gap and the Joint Defence Space Communication Station (JDSCS) at Nurrungar within the Woomera restricted area undertake a wide range of military and intelligence operations in space. Both installations were initiated in the late sixties and became operational in 1970. Successive governments have maintained that they are satisfied that the activities are not harmful to Australia's interests and that the facilities contribute to global stability. This view was reiterated in an official submission of the Department of Defence to the Parliamentary Joint Committee's enquiry into 'Australia-United States Relations' in June 1982.

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[7] W. Hayden, op.cit., p.17.

> In the case of JDSRF at Pine Gap and JDSCS at Nurrungar the nature and purpose of the facilities are secret. Neither facility is part of a weapons system and neither can be used to attack another country and both are conducted with Australia's full knowledge and participation.[8]

In answer to a further question about the reality of 'Australia's full knowledge and participation', the Defence Department spokesman R.W. Cottrill stated that

> Those at the site, Australian and American, whose responsibilities so require, have equal rights of access to all parts of the facility, to its activities and to all results of the research, excepting only national communications rooms where cipher communications are kept private ... The principle of full knowledge and concurrence underlies our participation in these joint facilities ... There is no way in which systematic deception or activities detrimental to Australian interests, could go undetected.[9]

This view has been confirmed more recently by the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

> Contrary to speculation which appears from time to time in the media, the information produced by Nurrungar and Pine Gap is fully available to Australia. Properly qualified Australian personnel participate in all areas of activity at these facilities. Australia is therefore able to ensure that nothing takes place in those facilities which is contrary to Australian Government policy, including the Australian Government's opposition to so-called nuclear war fighting and any concept of first strike capability.[10]

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[8] Department of Defence Submission to Joint Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence, 1 June 1982.

[9] R.W. Cottrill, evidence in ibid.

[10] W. Hayden, op.cit., p.18.

The third category of joint facilities in Australia includes a variety of seismic geological, meteorological, space tracking and other scientific projects in a number of locations throughout Australia. The major scientific facilities are those operated by the US National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) in Australia. Whilst Australia has always cooperated with the US in its satellite tracking operations by providing facilities and personnel at a variety of locations, there are now only three stations still operative. These operations, all located in the ACT, are the Honeysuckle Creek Tracking Station, the Tidbinbilla Deep Space Communication Complex and the Orroral Valley Spaceflight Tracking and Data Network Station. Together, they represent the most significant NASA facility outside the US and have assisted in tracking satellites, the Apollo manned lunar landing project, the Skylab project and other space probes to the planets and beyond. In this capacity, they provide an essential link in the US global communication network with spacecraft.

The fundamental tenet underlying Australian support for the joint facilities is the assessment that Australia's security is directly supported by the maintenance of the central strategic balance. The 'Strategic Basis of Australian Defence Policy' documents published recently address this question and although published without official approval have not had their authenticity officially denied. These documents outline this commitment:

> Australia as a non-nuclear power cannot contribute directly to US nuclear deterrent capability. However we contribute indirectly to the US strategic effort through the maintenance in Australia of defence related facilities - particularly communications for the USN's SSBM deterrent force and the important facilities at Pine Gap and Nurrungar. We also contribute to Western efforts by our providing staging facilities for USAF aircraft, by occasional provision of training areas and through the use of Australian port facilities by USN warships, including nuclear powered vessels.[11]

The recent Prime Ministerial statement on Arms Control and Disarmament reiterates this point.

> The government takes the view that the joint facilities directly contribute to the security that we enjoy every day and that this tangible benefit outweighs the possibility that risks might arise at some future time from our hosting the facilities.[12]

The PM's statement to Parliament after consultation with the United States Government acknowledged the need to assist public understanding and argued strongly that the facilities enhanced deterrence and arms control. Whilst these arguments are not new and have been well recognised by academics and other analysts in this area, the Prime Ministerial statement served to raise the general level of acceptance of defence policy development.

Similarly, a subsequent pamphlet by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr Hayden, was also directed towards explaining policy to the public as well as party factions.

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[11] 'The Strategic Basis Papers', op.cit., p.24.

[12] R.J. Hawke, op.cit.

In discussing the most effective means of promoting arms control and deterrence of nuclear war, he stated:

> The joint facilities contribute to that deterrence by providing timely knowledge of developments that have military significance. The more each side knows about what the other is doing, the greater is the confidence that they can each have in the system of mutual deterrence and in the unlikelihood of a nuclear Pearl Harbour. If we were to abolish the joint facilities from Australian territory, we would be delivering a major blow to deterrence and we would therefore be delivering a major blow to the cause of arms control.[13]

These Ministerial statements whether prompted by the leak of the Strategic Basis papers, internal party dynamics or other motives, are a welcome sign that the defence policy debate is receiving much more attention in the Parliament and the national press. Following the valuable work of the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence the renewed defence debate should assist the difficult process of policy development in a less certain strategic environment.

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[13] W. Hayden, op.cit., p.15.

CHAPTER III

AUSTRALIA'S STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT

The main strategic problems for Australia can be discussed at two levels. Firstly, there is the set of problems associated with the historical-political orientation toward the world and the changes in the global strategic balance and secondly, there are regional considerations related to assessments of potential threats and development of appropriate responses. Of course, the two are interconnected and the difficult problem facing defence planners is to define the security threats most likely to necessitate Australian action.

In recent years, the global strategic environment has altered considerably as a result of the changing relationship between the great powers, the emergence of new centres of power and influence such as Japan, China and the Middle East, US strategic reassessments including the Guam Doctrine, rapid technological changes in military capabilities as well as a number of volatile and largely unexpected developments in the international arena including events in Iran, Afghanistan and Central America. The impact of these global developments for the Australian strategic environment has yet to be fully assessed although a number of academic analysts have drawn attention to these issues and their importance for Australian defence planning in the eighties. It is apparent that Australia's national security needs in the post-Guam Doctrine

period are now very different from those of preceding years and that, in the absence of any clearly defined threat, the major problem remains the difficulty of determining policy and allocating resources in a political environment where defence matters including evaluation of national interests and future security needs are not perceived to be an immediate priority.

Underlying the strategic problems facing Australia are historical and political factors that have shaped Australian attitudes and policies. As a former colony, and until the Second World War, Australia depended almost entirely for her security on Britain and identified completely with the security issues facing the motherland. If Britain went to war, so too did Australia. By the time of the Pacific War however, it became abundantly clear that Australian and British national interests no longer coincided and Australia's leaders turned to the United States for security and protection. Alliance with the United States has characterised Australian post-war thinking and defence planning, at times necessitating the dispatch of Australian forces in support of American interests as insurance premiums for the continuation of American protection. However, since the Vietnam War and US reevaluation of its national interests in Southeast Asia, there is a heightened need for reassessment of the strategic environment and appropriate arrangements to ensure that Australia is capable of defending herself within her own region.

The habit of dependence on a great and powerful ally dies hard. The myth that Australia would not be capable of defending herself from her own resources is evidence of this and has been strongly disputed by a number of academic analysts. The Parliamentary Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence in its report on 'Threats to Australia's Security' recognises the need to dispel the myth and comments

> If this Report has any particular target it is the reasonably well informed citizen who has made no special study of defence, and who has the impression that because of its vast coastline and small population Australia is fundamentally indefensible.

And in discussing the regional environment the report comments that

> It is the Committee's hope that a frank discussion of such matters will dispel unnecessary fears, lead to an informed and balanced appreciation of Australia's regional relationships and improve the climate of understanding between Australia and its neighbours.[1]

The Committee is to be commended for attempting to overcome these pervasive attitudes of dependence which are not appropriate given Australia's changed strategic environment and the necessity for a more self reliant continental defence policy, following the demise of the forward defence era.

A further aspect of this discussion is the neglect of regional relations over the years as a result of orienting strategic analysis towards European and North American

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[1] Parliamentary Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence, Threats to Australia's Security, A.G.P.S., 1981, p.ix.

concerns. Certainly some regional commitments, the Colombo Plan, Five Power Defence arrangements and others have been implemented and some progress towards a more 'international' approach with greater recognition of Australia's regional role was begun during the Whitlam period and has continued to the present day, but on the whole, Australian preconceptions, philosophies and strategic planning are still being shaped to a large extent by the imperatives of the industrialised Western powers. This has important implications for Australia's defence planning in terms of policies, equipment purchases and alliances. The Strategic Basis papers provide both a global and regional view. The papers outline the significance of the central balance of power for Australia.

> The ability and resolve of the US to maintain effective strategic competition with the USSR is of fundamental importance for Australia's security. At the same time continuing strategic competition between the superpowers heightens global tensions and the risk fo confrontation and conflict.[2]

Strong argnments are presented for arms control and the US deterrent posture despite risks to Australia. There is recognition that Australia's limited resources mean that 'our contribution would always be in the company of allies and, given the limited size of our forces, would not be a major factor in determining the course of the conflict'.[3] In a conventional conflict between the superpowers Australia's major contribution would be in securing its immediate environment.

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[2] 'Strategic Basis Papers', op.cit., p.23.

[3] ibid., p.24.

> Within the framework of the US system of alliances around the world, we could be expected to maintain the necessary deployments and patrols to secure our own neighbourhood. We could also be expected to secure Australia's key air and naval support facilities and their approaches against the contingency of US or other allied use.[4]

Thus, while the central balance of power is vital to Australia's security, the regional environment is the primary area of planning concern.

In discussing regional concerns, the Strategic Basis papers give considerable emphasis to the Asia Pacific area and major power involvement. US interests in the region include support of ASEAN, isolation of Vietnam, rapport with China and commitment to ANZUS. The Soviet alliance with Vietnam and its access to the port of Cam Ranh Bay is a source of concern. The Strategic Basis papers state that Australia's defence activity in Southeast Asia 'is an important element in US evaluation of Australia's strategic importance' and that

> The US's supportive but 'over-the-horizon' role benefits Australian defence interests in minimal external involvement in the region, in constraint on Soviet and Vietnamese strategic pressure on the ASEAN governments and on those governments' confidence in dealing with the communist powers.[5]

However the papers recognise the constraints on US support for Australia in the event of conflict between Australia and a regional power such as Indonesia.

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[4] ibid.

[5] ibid., p.28.

> US alliance obligations to Australia are likely to lead it to influence Australia towards handling a regional dispute in such a way that would avoid difficulty for the US and certainly US confrontation with the regional powers.[6]

The Papers argue that the presence of Australian fighter squadrons at Butterworth under Five Power auspices is the most tangible expression of Australian interest in the security of the region and is also regarded by the US as supportive of Western interests in the region.[7] However in the event of Australian conflict with Indonesia, there would be real doubt about Malaysia's willingness to compromise itself with its ASEAN neighbours by agreeing to Australia's use of Butterworth aircraft. Thus in such a situation, it is clear that Australia could not rely on tangible forms of assistance from its neighbours or its major ally and would need to look to its own resources and diplomatic efforts to ameliorate the position. As the Papers state,

> Australian policy for some years has recognised that the threshold for direct US combat involvement could be quite high and circumstances at the time could significantly limit US willingness or ability to help Australia in other ways. While working to maximise the prospect of US support in any national defence emergency, Australian governments have therefore required clear priority to be given to the development of the capacity to conduct and support military operations for the independent defence of Australia.[8]

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[6] ibid.

[7] ibid.

[8] ibid., p.29.

In regard to Australian relations with Indonesia, the assessment recognises that there are continuing difficulties over Timor, Radio Australia's critical comment about domestic politics and potential PNG border problems with Irian Jaya dissidents, but reports the Office of National Assessments finding that Indonesian policy will remain directed towards maintaining a sound and stable relationship with Australia, PNG and the countries of the South Pacific.[9] It is estimated that any change in the direction of mounting a credible military threat to Australia would require massive external support and would take at least ten years to develop.

> Provided Indonesia continues to give priority in military development to internal security and defence of its national territory, it should be possible with no more than modest increases in defence capacity to ensure that Australia's superiority is preserved.[10]

The possibility of escalating tension between Indonesia and PNG is of enormous concern to Australia. Any military incursion by Indonesia resulting in PNG requests for Australian military assistance would make it very difficult for Australia to refuse to become involved. As the Strategic Basis papers state

> Our enduring strategic interest is to avoid significant Indonesian attack against or foreign occupation of PNG and PNG cooperation in Indonesian attack against Australia. It also requires the

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[9] ibid.

[10] ibid., p.30.

> continuing development of our policies for support of PNG's defence effort and of Australia's status as that country's primary defence partner.[11]

The importance of relations with Indonesia as the lynch pin on which Australia's regional relations are based is underscored by Australia's commitment to PNG and continued good relations between PNG and Indonesia are vital to Australia's national interests.

The Parliamentary Joint Committee in its enquiry into the Nature and Probability of Threats to Australia's Security analysed the strategic environment in terms of the types of threats and contingencies which could face Australia and the level of capability needed to pose the type of threat, who has the capacity, who may have the motive, the likely warning time and possible deterrents. In particular the Report draws attention to the intermediate level threats and low level contingencies which may require an Australian response independent of the actions of our allies and which therefore have implications for the structure and capability of our defence force.

Overall the Committee is cautiously reassuring, concluding that large-scale attack on Australia can be regarded as remote and improbable in the foreseeable future and that even for an economically advanced regional power, it could be expected to take at least five years to develop such a capacity.[12] The Report considers the invasion

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[11] ibid.

[12] Parliamentary Joint Committee, op.cit., p.95.

capability of regional powers including Japan, China, India, Vietnam and Indonesia, and while recognising that these countries have large armies, concludes that they 'currently do not have the capacity to mount a credible conventional attack on Australian territory as they do not have the air, sea and logistic capabilities' required.[13]

In relation to intermediate level threats or limited lodgement operations, the Report concludes that such threats should be considered years rather than months away and that

> ... it is difficult to envisage intermediate level threats arising against Australia short of a situation where the existing world order was disrupted, and where the attentions of Australia's main allies were totally preoccupied with serious military threats or large-scale economic disruption.[14]

In addition the Report recognises the need for a reasonably large and competent intelligence effort for a nation which spends relatively little of its gross national product on defence and which would require long lead times to develop adequate equipment and manpower.[15]

Other potential threats to Australia include low level contingencies such as sporadic attacks against power stations, petrol refineries or other facilities, illegal exploitation of offshore resources, smuggling operations, terrorist attacks against domestic or overseas facilities and disruptive activities by dissident or minority groups.

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[13] ibid., p.30.

[14] ibid., p.96.

[15] ibid., p.95.

The Strategic Basis papers discuss forms of pressure and harrassment which a country such as Indonesia could deploy either on the Australian mainland or Australian island territories which would elicit a disproportionate response.

> Provided the aim was political pressure rather than military destruction or territorial gain, the attacker could hold considerable strategic advantage. Attacks could be widely dispersed or random: relatively modest military pressure could oblige Australia to respond with quite disproportionate effort. The attacker could, if he wished, sustain low level activity virtually indefinitely, whereas the cost to Australia, both in resources and in political terms, of sustaining a posture of rapid response could be formidable.[16]

Strategic options, including retaliation against the attacking country, would be limited by the need to avoid escalating the dispute and the need to maintain national and international goodwill.

Because there might be little warning associated with such low level threats, it is essential that the peacetime organisation and structure of the Defence force and other civil defence agencies have the capacity to deal with these problems. Little evidence on these matters was provided to the Parliamentary Joint Committee in its hearings and a number of issues need to be addressed. These include the adequacy of intelligence gathering, coastal surveillance and

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16 'The Strategic Basis Papers', op.cit., p.30.

resources in remote locations, as well as the role of active diplomacy, trade, aid and defence cooperation with regional states.

In relation to global threats in terms of conventional warfare, Australia is relatively secure.

> Because of Australia's remote location and lack of land frontiers with other nations, because of its own not inconsiderable capacity to deter potential aggressors and because its alliance with the US involves the threat of American retaliation, Australia is a difficult invasion target. Currently only the United States would have the physical capacity to launch a full scale invasion of Australia and it clearly lacks any motive to do so. The Soviet Union would require South East Asian staging bases and additional equipment to mount a successful invasion, and it is difficult to envisage any conditions outside a general war that would make such a move worthwhile.[17]

It is in the context of global nuclear warfare that the potentially most damaging, albeit improbable, threat lies to Australia's security. This threat exists largely because of the presence in Australia of the US defence related facilities such as North West Cape, Pine Gap and Nurrungar. Opinions vary on the extent to which these facilities would be targeted by the Soviet Union. R.H. Mathams has argued that, whilst these facilities would certainly feature in a Soviet target list, he has 'never been able to assess if they would be near the top or bottom of the list'.[18] Further, he argues that the potential

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[17] Parliamentary Joint Committee, op.cit., p.94.

[18] R.H. Mathams, op.cit.

disadvantages are far outweighed by the significant advantages to Australia of having the joint facilities, including his personal knowledge of the discussions at very senior between groups of defence officials permitted under the Barnard-Schlesinger agreement, the intelligence assessments made available to Australian authorities as well as the opportunity afforded to put opinions forward to the American analytical machinery.[19] In addition, Mathams suggests that another advantage in hosting the facilities which may not have been fully realised is the potential to exercise greater leverage on the American.

> Another significant benefit to Australia in having joint facilities here is in the strategic sense. The very fact that Australia is a very substantial land base in the southern hemisphere is an asset which I think the Australian government should exploit.[20]

The Parliamentary Joint Committee in assessing the risk to Australia of hosting the joint facilities considered that because the Soviet Union expects that the joint facilities are involved in carrying out communications and early warning functions they 'would be first order targets in a nuclear war'. However the Committee also considers that Australia's role, firstly in hosting facilities at Pine Gap and Nurrungar which promote US National Technical Means of Verification (NTMV) of the level of the Soviet Union's strategic forces, and secondly, at North West Cape which enhances the command

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[19] ibid.

[20] ibid.

[21] Parliamentary Joint Committee, op.cit., p.31.

and control system of the American SLBM force, constitutes a substantial contribution towards maintenance of the central balance.[22]

Several issues need clarification in making an assessment of the significance of the joint facilities for Australia's national interests. Given that nuclear war is improbable, the facilities can be justified to the extent that they promote arms control and contribute to maintenance of the central balance. However, conversely, insofar as these installations enhance US nuclear war fighting capability, destabilising the global balance, they do not promote Australia's interests and should be reviewed. The problem facing policy makers and defence planners is to apply sufficient resources to monitor and evaluate developments in the global strategic balance and to promote good regional relations and a stable strategic climate.

Other strategic problems facing Australia are more practical in nature. They concern the issues involved in putting a policy of continental defence into effect taking into account the regional strategic climate. The last Defence White Paper setting out the Government's position on provisions for security from armed attack was published in 1976 and since that time, no further Defence White Papers have been published despite significant international developments in this period. While the general changes in

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[22] ibid., p.42.

Australia's strategic environment have certainly been recognised, considerable inertia appears to exist among policy makers and the general public inhibiting a thoroughgoing assessment of the practical implications of increased self reliance. The geographical realities of a large sparsely populated, dry continent, surrounded by oceans and to the north by unfamiliar cultures and peoples, traditionally have encouraged xenophobic attitudes and the strong alliances with powerful friends. However it is clear that, for the future, Australia will move in the direction of increased self reliance in her defence structure and an independent regional capability. In moving in this direction, policy development will take account of the reliability of the ANZUS security guarantee, the significance of the joint facilities and US perceptions of their obligations in this region.

CHAPTER IV

AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE POLICY AND THE AMERICAN ALLIANCE

The alliance with the United States has been the fundamental premise on which Australian defence planning has proceeded since the fifties. Australian policy makers and the general public have believed that the American alliance is the best defence policy Australia could have and to date, little attention has been given to alternative strategies. The strongest expression of support for the relationship was Prime Minister Holt's decalration that 'Australia was all the way with LBJ' and although subsequent leaders have moderated their public statements and given greater emphasis to Australia's independent status as a middle power in world affairs, it is apparent that there is a general public expectation that the United States will come to Australia's aid in times of need. Whilst this is certainly a most comforting approach, encouraged by Australia's relatively isolated geographical position in the Southern hemisphere away from the major areas of international conflict and tension and confirmed by Australia's readiness to host US facilities and follow the American lead in many major foreign policy decisions, it is not a substitute for an Australian national security policy. In the context of a rapidly changing strategic environment and recent developments in the Indian Ocean littoral it is imperative that defence planners constantly reevaluate Australia's defence preparedness the ANZUS alliance, the extent and reliability of American

protection and the role of the joint defence installations, and be provided with the necessary resources to carry out this work.

It is useful to consider the extent to which national interests are served on both sides of this asymmetric alliance. From the American perspective of a largely bipolar world, Australia has been a dependable ally in a distant region of the world during a period when dynamic events in Japan, China, Indochina, Indonesia, India, Pakistan and the Middle East have had great significance for US strategic assessments. The Parliamentary Joint Committee in its report on 'The ANZUS Alliance' notes the comments of both the US Under-Secretary for Defense for Policy, Dr Fred Ikle, and the US Deputy Secretary of State, Mr Walter Stoessel, approving Australia's defence efforts and the contribution made to regional security.

> Mr Stoessel referred to Australia's ties with the ASEAN and Pacific Nations and summed up his view of Australia's strategic position as anchoring 'the southern end of the western line of defense in East Asia and the Pacific' and standing guard over a secure, if lengthy, line of communication between the Pacific and Indian Oceans which was of great value in World War II and would be today in the event of war.[1]

Thus, Australia's compatible social and political traditions combined with its geographical location have given it a significant role, albeit a minor one, to play in American strategic analysis of the Asia-Pacific region.

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[1] Parliamentary Joint Committee, Australia-United States Relations: The ANZUS Alliance, p.41.

On Australia's part, the ANZUS Alliance is the cornerstone of defence planning and the development of national security policy. Reluctantly agreed to by the United States and pursued vigorously on the Australian side, it has served Australia's interests well. In providing great power commitment to 'act to meet the common danger' in the event of armed attack on any of the Parties (Articles IV and V of the Treaty), it has given a sense of security and reassurance of enormous value, not lessened by its intangible quality. Whilst any assessment of the importance of ANZUS includes both costs and benefits, the expectation of military support in a situation of grave danger to Australia remains the basic reason for the existence of the Treaty, the generally uncritical support for US policies and until recently, the unquestioning acceptance of the joint defence facilities.

The Department of Defence in its submission to the Joint Committee outlined the official view of the security value of ANZUS to Australia inthe following terms.

> First, if a security problem arose in our region, with which we could not deal unaided, the ANZUS treaty would guarantee Australia's security; secondly, ANZUS has a day-to-day relevance on the basis of a partnership which can be seen at work in such areas as exchanges of intelligence and military doctrine, the operations of the joint facilities and Australian participation in joint naval and military exercises; thirdly, ANZUS also has a wider significance as an important part of the web of alliances and treaty arrangements which constitute the Western Alliance - it is within this framework that the Australian offer of home porting facilities at Cockburn Sound

> to US Navy ships engaged in patrolling the Indian Ocean for example, is seen as linked to Australia's obligations under ANZUS, as is a range of cooperative activities including the joint defence facilities, cooperation in communications arrangements and logistic support arrangements, and the provision of transit facilities for US B52 aircraft and facilities for certain US military exercises here.[2]

However, in relation to the question of the likely response of the US to a military threat to Australia there was general agreement from all expert witnesses that 'Australia cannot automatically expect to receive US assistance in all contingencies'.[3] R.J. O'Neill described the likely US response as follows:

> In the event of a serious threat to Australia's security I think it is very difficult to imagine the United States Congress being at all reluctant to provide support for the security of Australia in view of the warmth of the relationship and the historical continuity of commitment that has gone on for some forty years now. What I would be more concerned about is not American political unwillingness to provide support but physical incapability. If Australia's security was threatened at a time of high tension elsewhere in the world and the Americans had to concentrate their forces more in the European and Middle East and North Asian theatres, there might not be very much left to maintain security in this part of the world.[4]

The benefits of the broader Australia-United States security relationship include the contribution to Australia's

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[2] ibid., p.29.

[3] ibid., p.30.

[4] ibid., p.32.

defence capability through supply and transfer of the latest weapons technology and equipment, the sharing of intelligence, the Memorandum of Understanding on mutual logistic support and the training benefit from a wide range of bilateral, ANZUS and other multilateral exercises. In addition the ANZUS relationship facilitates a strategic dialogue with the US, represents an effective deterrent to potential aggressors and confers an enhanced status on Australia within its region. In this context, and as noted in the Department of Defence submissions above, the joint defence installations are linked to Australia's obligations under ANZUS. As C. Bell has argued,

> If the decision to opt out of ANZUS were ever taken by any of the foreseeable policy makers in office in Canberra, it would obviously only be in political circumstances which would require the ending of the special arrangements governing the function of the US strategic and intelligence installations in Australia - North West Cape, Pine Gap and others. Whatever their nominal status these installations are essentially expressions of the general sense of parallel diplomatic and strategic interests of which ANZUS is the formal and legal acknowledgement. There would be no logic in continuing to sustain the installations if the treaty was abandoned: that would be on a par with continuing to pay the premium after renouncing the insurance policy.[5]

The costs of the ANZUS alliance include four main considerations: the extent to which the joint facilities may be nuclear targets, the loss of sovereignty as a result of inadequate consultation and access, the possible distortion

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[5] C. Bell, 'The Case for the Alliance', Paper presented to the SDSC Conference on Australian Defence Policies for the 1980s, A.N.U., 1981.

of national defence posture as a result of uncritical acceptance of US strategic analysis and diplomatic constraints imposed by the Alliance in relation to regional policies.

In relation to nuclear targeting the Parliamentary Joint Committee recognises that there is a finite risk that one or all of the facilities would be on the Soviet target list in the course of a nuclear war but states that

> ... the part played by the joint facilities at Pine Gap and Nurrungar in monitoring and gathering intelligence on Soviet forces and weapons movements, their verification capabilities in regard to arms limitations agreements, as well as the important contribution made by the facility at North West Cape to United States defence, make a vital contribution to the whole Western Alliance. Therefore on balance, the Committee agrees with the assessment made by this, and former governments, that the benefits to Western defences and hence Australia's ultimate security outweigh any risks the presence of these facilities entail.[6]

On the question of loss of Australian sovereignty, the Committee, while acknowledging instances of inadequate consultation over the joint facilities, rejects D. Ball's view that these examples demonstrate an unacceptable level of Australian access and participation. Successive spokesmen from major political parties have confirmed their general support for the functions and operations of the joint facilities although in recent years there has been greater sensitivity on the implications for Australian sovereignty. Overall, there is general support for the view that 'there is no unacceptable loss of sovereignty arising from the

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[6] Parliamentary Joint Committee, op.cit., p.58.

presence of the joint facilities' and that 'on balance, Australian access to and participation in the operations of the joint facility at North West Cape is appropriate in the context of Australia's responsibilities under the ANZUS Alliance'.[7] In addition the Committee emphasises the substantial benefit derived from the fact that the facilities are a 'card of entry' to allied intelligence policies and decision making.

The view that Australia's defence policy has been distorted by continued emphasis on ANZUS is argued by D. Ball who has drawn attention to the impossibility of stretching defence budget allocations to plan for both the defence of Australia as well as a forces structure designed for distant operations in conjunction with US forces.[8] The Strategic Basis papers place greatest emphasis on the need to ensure effective regional capabilities and state that

> In sum, the basic strategic features of our own neighbourhood have potential to absorb our total defence effort. Neighbourhood contingencies might now be seen as remote. Should they arise however we would face defence problems of grave dimensions.[9]

However R. O'Neill has suggested that, because of the less stable international environment, Australia's defence priorities should at present be directed primarily towards

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[7] ibid.

[8] ibid., p.63.

[9] 'The Strategic Basis Papers', op.cit., p.30.

maintenance of the global balance and support for the ANZUS alliance.[10]

These positions are not mutually exclusive and the problem facing defence planners is to optimise the resources available and to develop a national security policy flexible enough to adapt to changing priorities and assessments of national interest. The Committee concluded that ANZUS provides many practical benefits to Australian forces and does not distort defence policy.

> The present level of defence cooperation between Australia and the United States is not inimical to Australia's national or regional interests, and it offers a measure of protection should Soviet penetrations of the South Pacific-Indian Ocean areas become a more direct threat to Australia's own interests in the region.[11]

It is possible that the alliance may have resulted in some foreign policy constraints, for example in relation to proposals for a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean and a nuclear free zone in the Pacific Ocean, but on the whole there has been very little effect on policy development. Indeed, in matters concerning trade and investment, a strong Australian-US relationship has been forged but at the same time, each side has shown a willingness to take immediate action to preserve a bargaining position or protect national interests. The Australian government has also been prepared

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10 R. O'Neill, evidence to Parliamentary Joint Committee, 10 February 1981.

11 Parliamentary Joint Committee, op.cit., p.67.

to take strong action in relation to the extraterritorial reach of US laws.[12] In addition, Prof. Albinski notes that

> ... as a neighbouring power of modest size with an attractive decolonisation record and anti-nuclear testing credentials, Australia is able to bring influence to bear into Papua New Guinea and the rest of the South Pacific in ways quite unavailable to the US.[13]

Thus, in exercising a more independent approach to regional concerns and foreign policy formulation, Australia, in addition to promoting her own interests can promote those of the alliance as well.

Overall, it can be argued that in terms of nuclear war or major invasion the most advantageous policy for Australia is support for the Alliance including the joint facilities, along with a program of constant monitoring of national interests and strategic assessments. As P. Dibb comments

> Australia's membership of ANZUS seems likely to endure although it may well be modified. It is undoubtedly important for Australia to continue to host US facilities, which strengthen deterrence by providing warning and by increasing the credibility of the US sunmarine based second strike system. These facilities seem likely to remain of vital strategic concern to the US for a long time yet and, subject to the requirement of the fullest consultation between governments as to their functions and operations, they should be maintained on Australian soil.[14]

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[12] This is the subject of a further Report of the Joint Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence.

[13] Parliamentary Joint Committee, op.cit., p.73.

[14] P. Dibb, 'World Political and Strategic Trends Over the Next Twenty Years - Their Relevance to Australia', S.D.S.C. Working Paper No.65, p.14.

In this respect, the best defence policy for Australia rests on the continuation of ANZUS and the global protection afforded by the US nuclear umbrella, along with the development of an independent defence capability able to meet contingencies arising in the immediate region.

In meeting intermediate and low level threats, Australia's defence planners face a different set of problems. Threats such as lodgements on Australian territory, major raids, aggression against a regional country, blockades and disruption to shipping and trade, could conceivably be launched by some of Australia's Asian neighbours. However, at the present time, in the absence of any serious dispute, this is not considered likely. Nevertheless, in a more volatile international climate, threats could arise quickly and unexpectedly, especially if a hostile state was assisted to build up its capability by a superpower.

The Parliamentary Joint Committee Report points out that to meet such contingencies, Australian defence planning should emphasise effective and integrated surveillance systems especially in sparsely populated areas, the possibility of US intervention as a consequence of ANZUS and diplomatic efforts to bring pressure to bear on the hostile state. The Committee comments

> Taking into account that intermediate threats may call for a greater need for Australian self reliance, the military deterrents to these threats are not greatly different to those for invasion. Australia's naval and airforces must be seen to be capable of destroying the attacking forces while moving to or from Australia or of destroying their lines of

> communication with their home bases and should pose an unacceptable risk for any regional state contemplating hostile action ... The deterrent effect is enhanced if our ready reaction forces demonstrate the ability - preferably in cooperation with allies - to make rapid deployments to those parts of Australian territory that are more vulnerable.[15]

In the absence of a foreseeable threat the problem facing defence planners is the choice of a methodological approach. In addition, assessments need to be made regarding the cirucmstances in which its combat assistance under the ANZUS treaty might be invoked.[16] Langtry and Ball point to the urgent need to clarify the relevant operational concepts and policies.

> Should Australia pursue a maritime defence based on submarines and long range strike aircraft? Should we adopt a territorial concept involving the mobilisation of society at large, with large numbers armed with relatively low technology weapons? Should we rely on nuclear weapons as 'the absolute deterrent'? Should we accept occupation and prepare for mass civil resistance?[17]

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[15] Parliamentary Joint Committee, Threats to Australia's Security, op.cit., p.81.

[16] The only clear case is if a superpower rival makes an isolated attack on Australia. All other hypothetical situations entail ambiguous responses. This is outlined in R. Babbage, Rethinking Australia's Defence, p.13, Table 2. It is of course possible that ambiguity on Australian-US relations may enhance security by deterring potential aggressors who have no wish to risk antagonising a superpower. However ambiguity backed by a credible Australian capability would be preferable.

[17] J.O. Langtry and D. Ball, Controlling Australia's Threat Environment, p.x.

They believe that reluctance to delineate future policy is based on a general climate of opinion in favour of preserving the status quo in relation to the three services and draw attention to the implications of unclear strategic doctrine for issues of equipment procurement and forces planning. The recent debate over the purchase of an aircraft carrier and the Report of the Parliamentary Joint Committee on this subject illustrate the need for clarification of strategic doctrine.

Several methodological approaches have been applied. Current defence plans are based on a 'core force' approach whereby a wide range of incipient capabilities is maintained with the ability to expand rapidly in conjunction with acquisition of state-of-art knowledge of equipment. The major difficulty with this concept is the problem of defining core elements in the absence of an overall framework and policy guidance, and forecasting the resources required as well as the parameters of expansion. Consequently there is a danger that precedents and existing parity amongst the services may become institutionalised and that defence procurement may not be effective if services compete for resources and more high-technology equipment. As a largely reactive model, the core force concept has inherent limitations in its ability to cope with emergencies and this would also apply if the possible source of such emergencies could somehow be ascertained.

An alternative approach which has been used is to consider a wide range of possible threat contingencies and then design appropriate responses. The greatest problem with such a methodology is to determine whether all the likely possibilities have been covered and which are the most probable. Langtry and Ball have outlined why scenario-based methodologies are unsuitable.

> It is extremely difficult to design scenarios which are acceptable to all participants in a given decision-making process and more importantly which can remain relevant throughout the life cycle of a given capability.[18]

Babbage has attempted to broaden the scenario approach by placing emphasis on high levels of flexibility and adaptability in the Australian defence structure and by attaching priorities to a full array of potential pressures and threats. This approach was also adopted by the Parliamentary Joint Committee in its enquiry into Threats to Australia's Security. Such analysis provides a useful description of the range of threats and the global context, but in terms of practical planning decisions, is again subject to the same limitations as the scenario method. Babbage recognises that many of the potential conflicts arising from global crises are beyond Austalia's capacity to deter and suggests that the greatest efforts should be made towards prevention of serious instability by diplomatic means which are infinitely preferable to reliance on defensive measures.

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[18] ibid., p.7.

The 'prevention is better than cure' adage is embodied in the planning methodology and forces structure advocated by Langtry and Ball. They argue that a 'threat insensitive' approach will best serve Australia's interests, and premise their discussion on the theme that

> Australia's strategic advantage is such that we are in a position to dictate what would be needed by an aggressor to mount a military threat - especially high levels of threat such as lodgement operations and invasion - in other words that, through the proper application of a deterrent posture, Australia can effectively control its 'threat environment'.[19]

They recognise current resources constraints but argue that, by analysis of the theories of deterrence and disproportionate response and by designing a forces structure which balances deterrence capabilities with war fighting capabilities, Australia would be capable from its own resources of deterring, and if necessary, defeating all possible threats mounted by regional powers. They further argue that such threat insensitive methodology would increase national self confidence by relieving Australians of their insecurity and 'threat-mentality' and would enable greater economic and social cooperation throughout the region which in turn would foster a favourable security environment. Clearly, this is a highly desirable outcome, but considerable analysis and rethinking of these concepts (largely derived from the nuclear tactics of the superpowers) would have to occur before they could be translated into a suitable forces structure

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[19] ibid.

for Australia's defence, although the core of deterrent strike force (including F-111s, future F-18s etc.) already exists. Langtry and Ball themselves revert to a scenario approach when applying their principles, but on the whole, this methodology offers a more promising planning approach.

For the future it is clear that Australian defence policy will be developed in a climate of greater global tensions and where there is a no guarantee that the ANZUS alliance can be relied upon other than at times of grave danger to Australia. In the Review of ANZUS carried out in July 1983 the Foreign Minister Mr Hayden reaffirmed the main tenets of the treaty and clarified the following points about the relationship.

> The erroneous notion that Australia is totally dependent on ANZUS, and thus the United States for its national security, implies an unquestioning deferential relationship which would be unhealthy in itself and also a very poor basis for effective defence planning.[20]
>
> ... agreement was explicitly reached as to Australia's primary defence role, namely one of building our self defence capability within our regional context, rather than as a presumed global role as some sort of appendix of a superpower. That clarification will allow a much more explicit and precise formulation of our defence thinking and will govern the defence structure that we establish for our defence force.[21]

In relation to the joint defence facilities at North West Cape, Pine Gap and Nurrungar he stated that

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[20] W. Hayden, Statement on The Review of ANZUS, July 1983, p.7.

[21] ibid., p.10.

> ... the facilities clearly represent an important reflection and instance of the shared interests which the Treaty embodies, and the Government regards this form of cooperation with the United States as of unique value.[22]

These statements, together with Australia's initiative in requesting the Review, indicate a greater concern about national sovereignty and national interests whilst at the same time stressing the continuity of the relationship in terms of global security. It is also apparent that greater attention is being given to the development of coordinated defence, foreign and economic policies in Southeast Asia and the South West Pacific in order to promote regional stability and 'control' the 'threat environment'.

In terms of global nuclear threats it is evident that Australia is linked in a worldwide network of installations to the US strategic forces and in this respect as well as in the context of the ANZUS treaty, it can expect considerable American protection. However it is Australia's contribution to global stability and its hosting of American facilities which now underpins the ANZUS Alliance rather than the need for regional security. Further, the Australian foreign policy tradition of attempting to ensure regional stability by great power commitments is being influenced by an awareness of the need to establish bilateral and multilateral relations with Southeast Asian nations along with a more credible and independent defence capability.

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[22] ibid., p.11.

Paradoxically, the emphasis on a more self reliant defence policy dictates the need for closer intelligence, technical and military ties with the United States and continued cooperation in relation to the management of the joint facilities. The sharing of intelligence and the access to American strategic thinking are both extremely important for developing an ongoing analysis and review of national interests and the strategic environment. It appears that, to date, Australia may not have made full use of its potential influence with the Americans in relation to joint management of the installations and that outdated habits of suppressing information about the functions carried out at these stations may have caused unnecessary concern. The Prime Ministerial statement to Parliament on 6 June 1984 and the subsequent pamphlet by the Minister for Foreign Affairs have addressed the need for public information and attempted to clarify the issues. Certainly it can be expected that the nature of the operations carried out at the facilities will be of continued interest and that questions about Australian access to the facilities would be unlikely to disappear in a climate where information was unnecessarily restricted. In this respect, the promotion of informed public debate about the joint facilities, about the strategic environment and about Australian defence policy should be encouraged.

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